

Fairfax County Department of Housing and Community Development



First-Time Homebuyers Program

Affordable Homeownership Opportunities in Fairfax County

The First Time Homebuyers (FTHB) Program is a component of the [Affordable Dwelling Unit Program \(ADU\)](#) and has been providing opportunities to low- moderate-income households since 1992. Fairfax County's First-Time Homebuyers Program (FTHB) offers affordably priced townhomes and condominiums – both new and resale – to first-time homebuyers. Homes are offered at sale prices well below the sale price of other homes in the same development. The homes are sold directly by area builders or current owners and range from \$90,000- \$190,000 in price, depending on the type and size of the home. These townhomes and condominiums are located throughout Fairfax County within many communities that offer amenities such as swimming pools, tennis courts, jogging trails and tot lots.

Definition and Eligibility

What is a first-time homebuyer property? A first-time homebuyer property is a home sold through Fairfax County's First-Time Homebuyers Program to income eligible first-time homebuyers at below market prices. To be eligible for the program the candidate must be a First-Time homebuyer. The term "First-Time Homebuyer", means an individual who has never, or has not during the last 3-year period, had any present ownership interest in a principal residence.

However there are exemptions:

1. Displaced Homemaker – An adult, who has not worked full-time, worked a full year in years. She or he has worked without remuneration to care for home and family and could also be unemployed or under employed. Could be experiencing difficulty obtaining or upgrading employment.

2. Single Parent – An adult who is unmarried or divorced and has legal custody of a minor or is pregnant and has owned a home with spouse or resided in a home owned by spouse while married.

3. Senior – A household who has a member age 55 or over and no member under 18 and is purchasing a home in an age restricted community. She or he may have owned a home within the past three years but currently has no present ownership in a home.



4. Owner of Subsidized Cooperative – A member who is contributing to cooperative expenses based on their homes their monthly expenditures in reserve)

Income and Financial Eligibility Criteria

In addition, to qualify for the First-Time Homebuyers Program Eligibility List and be issued a *Certificate of Eligibility*, you must meet the following income criteria:

- 1) Households with at least \$25,000 in income. There are a couple of exceptions to the minimum income requirements. The first for senior purchasing in age restricted communities with household members age 55 or older and no member under 18. The second exemption are participants in the *Housing Choice Voucher* program who plan to use the rental voucher to purchase a home are both exempt from minimum income requirements however, both must still have sufficient income to qualify for a loan and meet all other program eligibility requirements.
- 2) Households with income below the income limits shown below:

First-Time Homebuyers Program Affordable Dwelling Unit (ADU) Homeownership Program Buyers arrange their own mortgage financing. Effective March 2015	
Household Size	Maximum Income at Initial Eligibility (70% MSA)*
1	\$ 53,500
2	\$ 61,150
3	\$ 68,800
4	\$ 76,450
5	\$ 82,550
6	\$ 88,700
7	\$ 94,800
8	\$ 100,900
<p>* The 70% MSA income limit is set by Zoning Ordinance (ADU provisions). Maximum Income limits are adjusted for household size using the HUD methodology, and are rounded to the nearest \$50.</p>	

- 3) Be able to obtain a County conditional approval letter for a mortgage (and ultimately obtain a mortgage if you are offered a home to purchase)

- 4) Credit Score of 640 or higher for each adult family member on the deed and loan
- 5) No Bankruptcy (at a minimum, it must have been at least two years since discharge of a bankruptcy)

FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR PURCHASE WITH THE FAIRFAX COUNTY FIRST-TIME HOMEBUYERS PROGRAM <small>See www.fairfaxcounty.gov/rha/ftthb for details.</small>		
Credit Score 640 <small>Credit Score of 640 or higher required for each adult family member on the deed and loan.</small>	Down Payment 3% <small>At least 3% of purchase price required as down payment.</small>	Closing Costs 3-5% <small>First-Time Homebuyer must provide closing costs of 3-5% of the purchase price.</small>
Reserves One Month <small>Purchasers are required to have at least one month of the amount of their monthly expenditures in reserve.</small>	Deposit \$1,000 <small>\$1,000 good-faith Deposit required.</small>	NO Bankruptcy <small>At a minimum, it must have been at least two years since discharge of a bankruptcy.</small>
NO Foreclosure <small>Eligible applicants shall have NO previous foreclosures.</small>	NO Co-signers <small>NO co-signers permitted. Each applicant must qualify on merit.</small>	NO Collections <small>All judgments and collections must be paid in full.</small>
NO Late Payments <small>A minimum of six months with no late payments.</small>	NO Judgments <small>All judgments and collections must be paid in full.</small>	Income/Debt Ratio 35/41 <small>Total housing expenses cannot exceed 35% of your income, and total expenses including debt cannot exceed 41% of your income.</small>
SAVINGS! SAVINGS! SAVINGS! <small>Approximately \$8,000-\$12,000 in Savings Required for Purchase.</small>		
<small>Fairfax County is committed to nondiscrimination on the basis of disability in all county programs, services and activities. Reasonable accommodations will be provided upon request. To request reasonable ADA accommodations or determine format of materials, call 703-246-5078 or TTY: 703-246-5078. F:\Users\WELSH\RE\HomeOwnership\Working\Files\2013\Financial Requirements</small>		

- 6) No Foreclosure (eligible applicants shall have NO previous foreclosures)
- 7) No Collections and Judgments (all judgments & collections must be paid in full)
- 8) No Co-Signers (no co-signers permitted. each applicant must qualify on merit)
- 9) No Late Payments (a minimum of six months with no late payments)
- 10) Income/Debt Ratio 35/41 (total housing expenses cannot exceed 35% of your income, and total expenses including debt cannot exceed 41% of your income)

- 11) Down Payment 3% (At least 3% of purchase price required as down payment)
- 12) Closing Costs 3-5% (First-Time Homebuyer must provide closing costs of 3-5% of the purchase price)
- 13) Reserves: 1-Month (Purchasers are required to have at least one month of the amount of their monthly expenditures in reserve)

How Do I Apply?

To be placed on the First-Time Homebuyers Program Eligibility List and receive a Certificate of Eligibility, you must complete the **Four phase application process**.

1. The **first phase** is to attend a **First-Time Homebuyers Orientation**. Since you have this booklet with you it is presumed that you have already fulfilled this requirement. If not please call at 703-246-5087 or go to: http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/rha/homeownership/ftthb_new_apps.htm to find out when and where the next sessions are going to be at.
2. As a First time homebuyer you are required to take a homeownership education class. This is the **second phase**. For a listing of available session, please go to our website at: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/rha/homeownership/homebuyereducation.htm> Upon completion of the six hour course you will receive a diploma of completion. For our program you must physically attend the sessions you cannot take the course online.

3. In order to prepare for homeownership, it is recommended that potential homebuyers meet early on with a lender and receive a **County conditional pre-approval letter**. This is the **Third phase**. The specific lenders listed in your informational package are willing to pre-approve homebuyers. The list provided is for your convenience and is not meant to be an endorsement of any particular lender. You may contact one of the listed lenders, or a **lender of your choice** to pre-approve you for a loan. Make sure that the loan officer you contact understands that you are only asking for a **“Conditional Pre-approval”** letter and not applying for a loan. The “Conditional Pre-approval letter” is generic and is in no way associated with any particular property or property type (i.e. Open Market or First-Time Homebuyer (FTHB) Unit). The **ONLY** purpose of the letter is to identify the maximum loan amount for which you are qualified. All borrowers/purchasers of the household who will be on the Deed and Deed of Trust must be included in this approval letter.

a) Lender Will:

- 1) Verify household income
- 2) Run credit report & may even provide copy
- 3) Estimate mortgage amount you can afford
- 4) Calculate front & back end **Debt/Income** ratios
- 5) Complete & sign pre-approval letter

4. The **Fourth and final phase** in the application process for the First-Time Homebuyers Program (FTHB) is the **Application Session**. In order to register you must have already completed the two hour *Orientation Session* and have a fully completed and signed *Lender Conditional Pre-Approval Letter*. Please do not attempt to register unless you have already completed the first three phases and are able to provide a fully completed and signed *FTHB Application* provided in the Red Folder at Orientation along with ALL accompanying documentation.

List of Required Documents (You must bring **COPIES** of your documents. Originals will not be accepted and copies will NOT be made for you)

a) **Application** (Bring in your red packet from the orientation “Passport to Homeownership”) Directions as to how to fill in the application is located inside your red packet. The application must be complete with all questions answered, and signatures of each household member age 18 and over. Be sure to

Application: Fairfax County First-Time Homebuyers Program (FTHB)

Head of Household: _____ Address: _____ City/State/Zip _____

Last Name _____ First Name _____

Please Check Application Type: FTHB New Application FTHB Recertification FTHB Drawing Change in Household

If applying for a FTHB Drawing, List Property Address: _____

If anyone listed on this application has had any ownership interest in a residence either in the United States or abroad within the past three years, please provide owner name(s) _____ and complete property address(es) _____

If anyone listed on this application has ever owned a home that went into foreclosure, please provide name(s) of owner(s) of foreclosed property: _____

PROGRAM PREFERENCES

Do you live or work in Fairfax County? Yes No

Do you have a child under 18 or a disabled dependent in your household? Yes No

Are you interested in a Senior Adult Community Unit? (Requires verification of age 55 or better) Yes No

Do you need a Mobility Accessible Unit? (Requires verification of mobility need) Yes No

HOUSEHOLD INFORMATION: List all persons who will be living in your home. The head of household should be listed first.

Household Member Last Name, First Name	Social Security No.	Date of Birth	S	A	R	Relation to Head	(1) Marital Status	(2) Citizenship	Employer Name and Address (must list all jobs)	Gross Annual Income (Net if Self-Employed)	(3) Income Source: Wages, SSA/SSA, Child Support, Pension	Fulltime Student Over 18? Yes or No
						HEAD						

(1) List marital status of each household member: S=Single, M=Married, Sep=Separated, D=Divorced W=Widowed
(2) C=Citizen, N=Non-Citizen
(3) See complete list of income sources on reverse side

point out the name of those adults who will be on the deed or loan.

- b) **First Time Homebuyer Diploma** must be issued within the past 12 months. Class cannot be taken on-line.
- c) **First-Time Homebuyer Pre-Approval Letter with Credit Reports.** Letter completed by your lender and signed by head of household or spouse along with copies of credit reports (prefer "Triple Merge" reports) and credit scores for all adult members of the household who will be on the deed and contribute to the qualifying household income. Your lender can provide a copy of your credit report for you. This lender letter must be on our required "First-Time Homebuyer" form most recently revised in 2015.

The image shows two pages of a form titled "FAIRFAX COUNTY FIRST-TIME HOMEBUYER LENDER INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETION OF ATTACHED LENDER CONDITIONAL PRE-APPROVAL LETTER".

Page 1 (left) includes:

- Introduction:** The Fairfax County First-Time Homebuyer Program (FTHB) offers homes to financially eligible low-to-moderate income households at below market prices. The Conditional Pre-Approval Letter is one of the key components used to determine the eligibility of program applicants. It must be completed with the financial requirements of the FTHB program in mind and on this form. Lender pre-qualification letters are not acceptable.
- Definitions:**
 - Applicants are household members who are included on the FTHB application.
 - Borrowers are household members who will be on the Loan or Deed of Trust.
 - Purchasers are household members who will be on the Deed.
 - Gifts by Income Ratio:
 - Total Estimated Monthly Housing Cost = Total Monthly Household Gross Income
 - Total Monthly Cost (including Estimated Housing Cost) = Total Monthly Household Gross Income
- General Requirements:**
 - All sections of the letter must be completed and all questions must be answered.
 - Information must be provided for each Borrower/Purchaser of the household as defined above.
 - The Purchase and Loan amounts should reflect the program for which the applicant is qualified given their Income, Debt, Assets and Ratio as outlined in the letter.
 - Notes regarding an applicant's eligibility should be included in the Other Comments field.
 - The letter must be signed & dated by both the Lender & Borrowers/Purchasers.
- Financial Requirements:**
 - Borrowers/Purchasers are required to have a minimum Credit Score of 640.
 - A Triple-Merge Credit Report is required for all Borrowers/Purchasers.
 - The maximum Debt-to-Income Ratio allowed by the program are 38/41.
 - The gross assets that an applicant must have to be eligible for the program are listed in that section and must be verified by the lender.
 - Gift Money must be documented.

Page 2 (right) includes:

- HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS (OR APPLICANTS):** A table with columns: (1) Name, (2) Will be on Deed, (3) Will be on Loan, (4) Credit Score.
- List household members who have owned a home within the past three years. If none, write "none."**
- List household members who have had a foreclosure. If none, write "none."**
- BORROWER'S INCOME ON WHICH QUALIFICATION AND RATIOS ARE BASED:** A table with columns: Name, Income Source, Gross Monthly \$.
- List income for other household members not on the deed or loan:** A table with columns: Name, Income Source, Gross Monthly \$.
- ASSETS: (Note: Applicant must disclose all financial assets to their lender)** A table with columns: Financial Accounts (e.g., Savings, Checking, Certificates of Deposit, IRAs, Stocks, Cash on Hand, Money Market, IRAs, Quira, etc.), Total Financial Accounts, Total Cash on Hand, Total Monetary Gifts, Total Verified Assets, Total Verified Assets.
- Based on assets listed above, please calculate the following:** Down Payment (2% required by FTHB underwriting criteria), CLOSING COSTS (4% required by FTHB policy), RESERVE (1 month of Total Estimated Monthly Expense from below).

- d) **Tax Return & W-2 Copies** of your most recent 1040 Federal Tax Return and W-2s for each household member age 18 and over.
(If you are self-employed we must have a copy of schedule C. If you itemized deductions, we must also have a copy of Schedule A. If any adult in your household did not file a tax return, you must have verification from the IRS that they did not file a tax return even if they were claimed as a dependent on your tax return. (You may call 1-800-829-1040, complete form 4506T to request a transcript, or visit a local IRS office)
- e) **Verification of immigration status or citizenship for all household members.**
- f) **Government Issue Photo ID** (for all adults)
- g) **If applicable: Divorce Papers and/or Student Status** (for students OVER 18 with earned income)

To register, you must bring the documents into the *Homeownership Resource Center* located at 3700 Pender Drive, Fairfax, Virginia 22030 during the hours of 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Monday-Friday except Wednesdays. On Wednesdays you may come between 1:00-3:00

p.m. Staff will review your documents. **Please note** that if the documents are incomplete, they will be returned to you. You will then need to come back once you have all of the required documents. Once your documents are complete you will be scheduled for an application session presentation. Until you receive confirmation, you are not considered registered for the session and therefore should not attempt to attend. You should allow up to two (2) hours as the presentation is followed by a question and answer session. You should arrive for your appointment approximately 15-minutes before the scheduled start time. No one will be admitted to the session 15-minutes after the scheduled start time. No children under the age of 18 are allowed to attend the session. Once you submit your document and finish step 3, you will be issued a First Time Home Buyer Program Certificate.



DRAWING PROCEDURE

First-Time Homebuyers Purchasing Process

The Drawing

When homes become available for sale, they are sold through a selection process called a **Drawing**. Formerly called the ‘Lottery,’ a **Drawing** is the term used to describe the process of selecting who on our FTHB eligibility list is chosen to buy an available home.

The Drawing is NOT a purely random selection.

The drawing process itself consists of two parts. The first part is the screening. This limits who may apply for a given condominium or townhouse. To be eligible for a given drawing (which is different from being eligible for the First-Time Homebuyers Program), an applicant must (a) be pre-approved for a mortgage loan equal to or greater than the sales price of the home; and (b) have a household size appropriate for the unit. The screening does not affect the randomness of a drawing; it simply eliminates those who are either unable to purchase a given unit or whose household size is not appropriate for the unit. **Note:** Homes offered in senior or adult communities,

a household must have at least one household member age 55 or older AND no household members age 18 or younger.

The second part of the drawing process uses priority points. These are “preferences given to households that meet specific conditions, such as living or working in Fairfax County or being in the program for one or more years. The maximum number of priority points that a household can have is nine (9). Points are assigned for meeting the following criteria:

1. Living or working in Fairfax County – **5 points**
2. Having one or more dependent children under the age of 18 or disabled dependents in household– **1 point**
3. For every year (up to 3 years) on the First-Time Homebuyers Eligible Homebuyers List – **1 point** per year

The priority points work by promoting a household toward the top of the Drawing List. In a given drawing, all households with 9 priority points would be moved to the top of the list, followed by all households with 8 priority points, etc. While all of the households within a “priority group have the same chance of being ranked first through a random selection process, households with more priority points always win a drawing.

Homes that are offered with accessibility features are the only exception. Households having one or more persons with a physician-certified handicap or physical disability limiting mobility are given a “mobility priority. Households with the mobility priority are promoted to the top of the list regardless of their number of priority points. If multiple households with the mobility priority apply for the same unit, priority points are considered within the group of mobility priority households followed by the households without the mobility priority. To claim a mobility priority, a completed physician signed First-Time Homebuyers Program Accessibility Preference Form.

The link is: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/rha/homeownership/forms/fthbaccessprefform.pdf)

Once the drawing takes place a list of ranked applicants is generated, the top five ranked households will be notified by First-Time Homebuyers Program staff to re-verify household **income and view the house. The entire drawing list will also be listed on the First-Time Homebuyers Program webpage.** The household ranked first has the first opportunity to purchase the home. If they refuse, the household ranked second has the opportunity to purchase, followed by the household ranked third, etc. Refusing to purchase a home DOES NOT in any way penalize a household in future drawings.

Drawing Process for New Properties

- 1) View the listing on our website.
<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/rha/homeownership/listings.htm>

- 2) Submit information required for the drawing online via the listing if you meet the eligibility requirements and are interested in purchasing the property.

The FLATS at METROWEST
(Up to 2 Properties Available)
Model: Cannes
Rittenhouse Circle
Fairfax, VA 22031



Drawing Eligibility	Drawing Application
Household Size: 2-4 people	Certificate #:
Purchase Limit: \$108,000	Important: Enter THE COMPLETE certificate number.
November 19, 2014 **The results of this drawing will be posted approximately 5 business days after this listing closes.**	Email:
Deadline:	Phone:
	<input type="button" value="Submit"/>

If you meet the Drawing Eligibility requirements for this drawing and are interested in purchasing this home, please complete the Drawing Application form and click SUBMIT. ***ONLY CLICK THE SUBMIT BUTTON ONCE***
Those selected by the drawing to purchase will be required to verify household income and eligibility before viewing the unit(s) and signing a sales contract.
PLEASE CLICK THIS LINK FOR IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING APPLYING FOR THE DRAWING

- 3) View the drawing results on our website. You will be contacted if you are among the top applicants in the drawing.
- 4) Provide all of the documents listed on the back of the application that apply to your household to verify your eligibility within 2 business days following notification
- 5) Once eligible applicants have been identified, their names will be provided to the developer.
- 6) The developer will contact the applicants to schedule an appointment to view the property. Applicants will have priority to purchase based on their rank in the drawing.
- 7) We will proceed down the list to the next applicant if the person ahead does not purchase the property.
- 8) Contract & Settlement managed by developer.

NOTE: The FTHB staff utilizes a variety of 3rd party resources to verify that the information on your application is complete and accurate. This includes both public and private information intended to detect and prevent fraud.

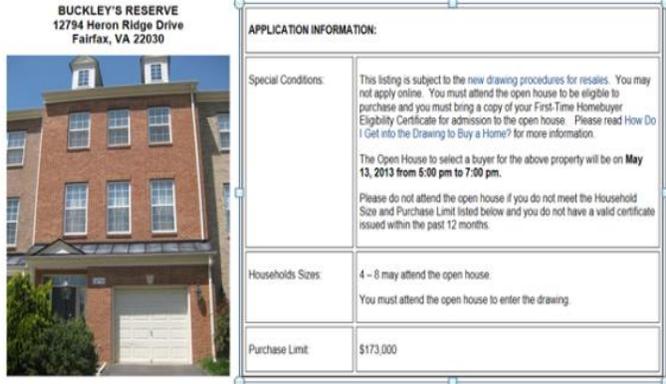
Drawing Process for Resale Properties

- 1) Attend an open house for the property listed to be eligible to enter the drawing.
- 2) Bring a copy of your ***Certificate of Eligibility*** to the open house. This is your ticket of admission. It must be active and meet the required household size & purchase limit amount shown in the property listing.

- 3) Sign a **Letter of Intent** at the open house indicating whether you want to be included in the drawing.
- 4) View the results of the drawing on our website

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/rha/homeownership/archive.htm>

You will be contacted if you are the top drawing winner.



- 5) Provide all of the documents listed on the back of the application that apply to your household to verify your eligibility within 2 business days following notification.
- 6) Contract & Settlement managed by the FTHB Program staff.

NOTE: The FTHB staff utilizes a variety of 3rd party resources to verify that the information on your application is complete and accurate. This includes both public and private information intended to detect and prevent fraud.

Immediately Available Properties

On occasion, some properties become available immediately; whether you have zero points or nine points or whether you are a single person or not, you can purchase these properties immediately without having to go through the drawing process. If you enroll in our program, and you are interested in purchasing one of these properties, contact the FTHB staff member listed for details.

As a Homeowner You:

Physically

1. Must maintain interior & exterior as applicable
2. Must maintain landscaping as applicable
3. Must comply with local building code & zoning ordinances

4. Must comply with community's HOA guidelines

Financially

1. Must pay mortgage
2. Must pay real estate tax
3. Must pay HOA/COA dues
4. Must pay any HOA/COA special assessments that may be required
5. Must pay homeowner's insurance

Legally

1. You are legally responsible for your home; consider protecting against any legal liability.

CONTROL PERIOD

30 Year Covenant

Homes that are for sale through the FTHB Program, whether new or re-sale houses, have controls on them for 30 years. These controls are in the form of a restrictive covenant that states the owner must:

1. Occupy the home; **no renting is allowed**. You must fill out an annual occupancy affidavit stating that you occupy the property.
2. **Refinance restrictions apply**. You can only refinance the principal or amount that you owe on the house.
3. **Must Offer Property to County First Upon Resale**
4. Sell the home at a **controlled resale price** through the First-Time Homebuyers Program to certified program applicants during the 30-year control period. Contact our office to find out what the control price is when you refinance or resell.

CONTROL PRICE = *Purchase Price + Annual Consumer Price Index (CPI) + Allowed Improvements*

Example: Sell property in 2020 that was purchased in 2013

Purchase Price:	\$150,000
Total Annual CPI* (2013-2020):	+\$31,200
Allowed (Approved) Improvements:	+ <u>\$500</u>
Resale Control Price:	\$181,700

***CPI Average Between 1991 – 2014 was 2.6% (Used for all years in example)**

5. Owners are responsible for all home maintenance, home improvements and compliance with homeowner or condominium rules and regulations. For new homes, the builder is responsible for all warranty items.

Qualifying Improvements

If you have any approved structural improvements you may be given credit according to a yearly depreciation scale if you sale your home within the 30 year covenant.

Some examples of qualifying improvements are:

- A. Appliances purchased by the owner within the past 5 years.
- B. Permanent structural additions such as finished basements and added bathrooms.
- C. Decks, patios and fences less than ten (10) years old.
- D. Major structural repairs needed to comply with state and local codes.
- E. Minor structural repairs (windows, doors, walls) needed to comply with state and local codes , or necessary to maintain health and safety or improve energy efficiency. This also applies to replacement of major HVAC system components.
- F. Major plumbing repairs needed to comply with state and local codes as documented by a plumbing contractor.
- G. Energy conservation improvements, such as storm doors or windows, that remains with the property.
- H. Replacement of major roof components, to be amortized.
- I. Exterior painting done within one (1) year of sale.
- J. Flooring installed within two (2) years of sale.

NOTE: Receipts are required in order to receive credit for allowable improvements. When applicable, licensed contractors must be used and building permits and HOA/COA approval must be obtained.

NOTE: There is a \$50 per day fine for non-compliance.

The Following Rules Apply After The 30-Year Control Period

After the initial 30-year Control Period, an owner can sell at market rate, but the net proceeds are split between the owner and the Fairfax County Housing Trust Fund.

1. Do Not Have to LIVE in Property – **Allowed to RENT**
2. Annual Occupancy **Affidavit Not Required**
3. **Some Refinancing Restrictions Still Apply**
4. **Must Offer Property to County First Upon Resale**
5. Can **Sell at Market Price**

Selling Your FTHB Property

1. Contact FTHB Program Staff; bring in documentation for any allowable improvements;
2. FTHB Program Staff will send you a resale letter with an ‘Intent to Sell’ Letter;
3. Sign and return the ‘Intent to Sell’ Letter by certified mail;
4. Unit must have marketable title and be in acceptable physical condition;
5. FTHB Program Staff will market the FTHB property, conduct a housing drawing, and have an open house with you to locate a buyer from our list of eligible buyers;
6. FTHB Program Staff will contact the buyers by order of their drawing rank and verify final eligibility for the program.
7. Staff will prepare contracts for the next eligible purchaser. In most cases the FCRHA will purchase the home from you within 90 days of receiving written

intent to sell and simultaneously obtain another first-time homebuyer to purchase your unit from the FCRHA.

8. Go to settlement.

FAQs

What is meant by "first-time homebuyer"?

I have never owned a home, but my wife has. A first-time homebuyer is someone who has either never previously owned a home or who has not owned residential property in the past three years. If anyone in your household previously owned a home within the last three years, you are not eligible to participate in the sales program.

Is income of full-time students counted?

Income from wages of full-time students who are age 18 and above and dependents will not be counted if verification of full-time student status is provided. You must also provide verification of the income to be excluded.

Who qualifies for a "Displaced Homemaker" waiver of the first-time homebuyer requirement?

This waiver may apply to someone who has owned residential property within the most recent three year period if they owned the property with a spouse and the property had to be sold as a result of a divorce. Documentation would have to be presented to verify qualification for a waiver.

I cannot find all my tax information that is required. Do you really need a complete tax return?

Yes. You will need to contact the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) at 1-800-829-1040 and request a summary for the items you are missing.

What must be included with the application? If I am self-employed, what is accepted in lieu of a paystub?

Your application must include a copy of your most recent federal income tax return with all attached schedules for each family member filing a return and W-2 forms. Copies of the three most recent paystubs for every wage earner in the family, verification of child support/alimony, and other sources of income, if applicable, are also required.

If you are self-employed, you must submit income and expense information for the most recent three-month period along with two years of federal tax returns with required schedules.

My last tax return shows more income than I now make. Will this affect my eligibility for the program?

Probably not; tax returns are not used to determine your current income. Your tax return is used to verify other information on your application.

My former husband is on my last tax return. What should I submit to show he is not part of my household?

An executed copy of your divorce decree will serve as verification in case of divorce; in case of death, a death certificate.

What Happens if Owner Dies?

If the owner passes away, the person/entity responsible for the state must provide a death certificate to the County. If the inheritor(s) wishes to keep the property, he/she/they must reapply and requalify for the property. If he/she/they do not qualify, the property must be sold.



Do I have to be a citizen to apply?

No.

I just arrived in the U.S. and have never filed taxes. What do I need instead of tax returns?

You must provide documentation to verify the date of your entry into the U.S. (a copy of immigration approval) and a letter from the IRS that you did not file a tax return after you have obtained a Social Security number or a tax identification number.

My children are not dependents on my tax return, however, they live with me. Can I put them on my application?

Yes, however, you must provide documentation to verify that they live with you, i.e., school records and/or your custody agreement.

I do not receive paycheck stubs. My employer pays me by check every Friday. What can I submit instead?

You can have your employer verify your gross annual income and year to date (YTD) earnings on company letterhead, or request your employer to complete an Income Verification form (available from our office).

Where are these properties located?

All of the properties offered through the FTHB program are located throughout Fairfax County. These properties are located in many new home communities as well as established communities.

Should I apply for each drawing?

You should only apply for those drawings for homes that you would be willing to purchase.

What happens if I apply for a drawing and change my mind? Will my refusal to buy the property hurt my chances in subsequent drawings?

No, not unless you have signed a sales contract. In that case, it is the developer's option whether to release you from your obligation to purchase under the contract. If you have not signed a contract of sale and something happens, you need to inform the builder or owner that you are no longer interested in the property. Your name will be removed from the drawing. This action will not adversely affect your opportunity in the next drawing.

If I apply for a drawing, how do I find out about the results of the drawing?

Only drawing winners will be notified by mail within one week of the drawing. Please do not call the Department of Housing. Due to volume of applicants, we cannot respond to individual inquiries. Additionally, the drawing list is sent to the builder or owner the same date the drawing is conducted. In some cases you may receive a telephone call from the builder or owner before you receive your letter.

Will the Department of Housing help me secure a loan in order to purchase the property?

No. You will need to secure your own financing. For new developments, the builder is required to contribute up to 3% of the sales price toward closing costs. Regardless, you will need cash funds to go to closing. We strongly recommend that you contact a lender to get pre-approved for a loan before you submit a drawing application.

Are there any classes that I can take to help me understand the home buying process?

Yes. There are a number of organizations that provide homebuyer education programs. The Virginia Housing Development Authority (VHDA) offers homebuyers' classes at a number of sites. You may contact the VHDA at 1-888-643-2696 for more information on the dates and sites for these classes. Homeownership education is critical to making sound decisions about buying a home.

What happens if I get a new job after receiving my Certificate of Eligibility? Will this make me ineligible?

You must be income eligible at the time of purchase. While your Certificate is good for one year, changes in income and family size may affect your eligibility at any time. Report all changes

immediately so that the Department of Housing can make a determination of your continued eligibility.

Can I sell my home if I buy it through this program?

Yes. Your home can be resold anytime. However, during the thirty-year (30) control period, the resale is subject to certain restrictions that are recorded with your deed. Make sure you clearly understand what controls are placed on the property. These controls are summarized in the First-Time Homebuyers brochure and are recorded in a covenant that is attached to your sales contract.

Can I make improvements to my home under the ADU program?

Yes. However only structural improvements can be counted toward the calculation of the resale price. Structural improvements include adding a deck, family room, bathroom, or patio. Replacements and upgrades do not count as structural improvements. Be sure that you keep all receipts, permits, and inspection reports to document your structural improvements.

Can I rent a home purchased through this program?

No. The home must be occupied by the purchaser(s) as their primary residence. There are no provisions for renting. Additionally, owners of affordable dwellings units must execute a yearly affidavit certifying occupancy. Owners who fail to submit an executed affidavit and/or fail to reside in the home may be fined fifty (\$50) dollars per day

Further Information

1. You can visit us at the Homeownership Resource Center between 9 AM and 4 PM on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday; **Wednesday hours are between 1 and 4 PM**
2. You can visit us on the **Web** at: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/homebuyer
3. You can **Email** us at: FTHBhomebuyers@fairfaxcounty.gov
4. You can **call** us at 703-246-5087 during customer service hours: Monday-Friday, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.